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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 17, 2003

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Michigan Lauded For Best Broadband Strategy in New Study

LANSING— Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today participated in a news teleconference to announce Michigan's top ranking in a new study of state broadband policies. The study, "The State Broadband Index," was commissioned by TechNet, a national organization of more than 150 technology and business executives who advocate for expanded access to high-speed Internet connections for U.S. consumers and small businesses.

"In Michigan, broadband is about making sure that our businesses and consumers are moving at the speed of technology," Granholm said.

A 2001 study commissioned by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) showed that development of a comprehensive statewide broadband network could create 497,000 jobs and add \$440 billion to Michigan's gross state product over 10 years. In 2002, the Michigan Legislature created the Michigan Broadband Development Authority (MBDA) with the goal of expanding access to broadband services to consumers and businesses in Michigan, particularly in underserved urban and rural communities. Today, the Granholm administration and MBDA are focused on expanding Michigan's broadband infrastructure with the support of the Department of Information Technology, Consumer and Industry Services, and the MEDC.

According to the report: "Michigan leads the list of states that have enacted policies to accelerate broadband deployment for broadband applications and services by virtue of a comprehensive strategy to bring the benefits of broadband to all its citizens through policies that clear deployment roadblocks, promote supply and spur demand." The Index gave Michigan a score of 133.6 points based on a variety of factors that influence its policy climate. The second ranking state, Florida, scored 77.6 points.

"Broadband is about more than giving people access to the online world of shopping and information; it's another important tool to grow our economy and attract new jobs," Granholm added. "TechNet's report is exciting for all of us, and I appreciate their recognition of our efforts to bring the digital age closer to citizens and businesses in Michigan."

For a copy of the full report, please visit www.technet.org, or call Jim Hock at 202-973-6616 for more information.